

THE TYPES AND TYPE-LOCALITIES OF *OREORTYX PICTUS*
(DOUGLAS) AND *ORTYX PLUMIFERUS* GOULD

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There are two northern races of the North American species known as *Oreortyx pictus* (Mountain Quail). According to the fifth edition of the A.O.U. Check-list of North American birds (1957), the dark form on the west side of the Cascade Mountains from northwestern California northward to western Washington is *O. pictus palmeri* Oberholser, 1923. The other, a pale race, is found east of the Cascade Mountains in eastern Washington southward to east-central California, and is called *O. p. pictus* (Douglas, 1829). *Oreortyx plumiferus* (Gould, 1837) was synonymized with *Oreortyx pictus pictus* by Oberholser (1923).

A critical appraisal of the pertinent literature and the existing types reveals that the name *plumiferus* should be applied to the pale form and *pictus* to the dark form. This is a return to the treatment in the third (1910) and earlier editions of the A.O.U. Check-list. The remainder of this paper documents the evidence supporting this arrangement.

The specimens upon which the names *pictus* and *plumiferus* were based were collected by David Douglas during his travels in western North America. Originally regarded as species of *Ortyx*, these names were first written as *picta* and *plumifera*. However, *Ortyx* (and *Oreortyx*) is not feminine but masculine, according to Woods (1944: 170), and the termination of the trivial names has been changed accordingly.

In the fall of 1826, Douglas traveled from Ft. Vancouver (=Vancouver, Washington), southward along the Multnomah (=Willamette) River to near what is now Eugene in Lane County, Oregon, thence southwestward to the junction of Elk Creek and the Umpqua River, and further south to near what is now Roseburg (Douglas, 1914; Morwood, 1973). Careful scrutiny of Douglas's activities, particularly as reported in his journal (Douglas 1914:220) has revealed that he collected a specimen of *O. pictus* northeast of what is now Elkton in western Douglas County on 12 October. He wrote that the specimen was too badly shattered by shot to be preserved. Although Douglas made no entries in his journal that would suggest he collected additional specimens of *pictus* during October or November, he later stated (Douglas, 1829b:145) that he preserved specimens in November 1826 but failed to mention where these specimens were col-

lected. Nevertheless, according to his journal (Douglas, 1914), he must have been somewhere between Elkton and Eugene or further north along the Willamette River. Douglas (1829b) reported losing these specimens while crossing a river in November 1826. Such a mishap occurred on 15 November (Douglas, 1914:237) while crossing the Sandiam (=Santiam) River, a tributary of the Willamette River in Linn County, Oregon.

Douglas also traveled in California (Morwood, 1973); but his activities there are not well known because his journals and many specimens were lost in another accident on the Fraser River, British Columbia (Jepson, 1933). Although Douglas may have collected specimens of *Oreortyx pictus* while in California, he did not visit there until late 1830, well after *Oreortyx pictus* was described (Douglas, 1829a). The A.O.U. Check-list (1931; 1957) gave the type-locality of *pictus* as the "interior of California as far north as 45°N"—the range given by Douglas (1829b). As we have just seen, this is misleading since "California" in Douglas' day also included Oregon.

Oberholser (1923) concluded that the lost specimens of *pictus* collected by Douglas had been taken in western Oregon. Oberholser, apparently unaware of the posthumous publication of Douglas's journals (1904; 1914), restricted the type-locality of *pictus* to the headwaters of the Umpqua River near the Calapooya Mountains. Although birds from that region are of the pale form, Douglas neither visited the headwaters of the Umpqua River nor was he near the Calapooya Mountains.

The only evidence concerning the provenance of the specimens on which Douglas based the name *pictus* comes from his statements that he shot and discarded a specimen in October and that he preserved but lost specimens in November. The October specimen is not mentioned in the original description (Douglas, 1829a) or in Douglas's (1829b) more detailed discussion on *pictus*, but the November specimens are discussed in the latter publication. Although Douglas (1829a, 1829b) did not so state, the original description would appear to have been based on the November specimens. During November, Douglas was west of the Cascade Mountains where he crossed the Santiam River on 15 November 1826. Therefore, I restrict the type-locality of *Oreortyx pictus* to the junction of the Willamette and Santiam rivers, Linn County, Oregon. The name *pictus* is thus applicable to the dark form. Because the name *palmeri* Oberholser, 1923 (type-locality: Yaquina, Lincoln County, Oregon), is also applicable to this race, it becomes a subjective junior synonym.

Subsequent to his description of *O. pictus*, Douglas obtained additional specimens. Three were discovered among Douglas's effects (Gould, 1850) and were the basis for Gould's (1837a) "*Ortyx plumifera*." Gould (1837a, 1837b) gave the range of *plumiferus* as "California," a name which at that date applied to the region south of the Columbia River. Presumably, because Douglas had shipped his biological materials to London from the

Hawaiian Islands in early September 1832 and the specimens available to Gould had been among Douglas's effects, these specimens must have been acquired by Douglas between October 1832 and October 1833. During that time Douglas was in the Pacific Northwest, and from there he made his last trip to the Hawaiian Islands where he remained until his death in 1834 (McKelvey, 1955). Oberholser (1923:83) restricted the type-locality of *plumiferus* to the northern Willamette Valley in western Oregon "since Douglas was known to have traveled in this general region."

Oberholser (1923) believed that the plate of *plumiferus* in Gould (1837a) represented a bird of the pale race. Oberholser did not, however, examine specimens from the Willamette Valley (according to Allan Duvall, unpublished notes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) until after his 1923 publication. Then he decided that birds from the northern Willamette Valley belonged to the dark form "*palmeri*," to which indeed they do. Oberholser (*vide* Duvall's notes) maintained that he erred only in his restriction of the type-locality of *plumiferus* and that Gould's plate clearly represented the paler birds. I have examined Gould's (1837a) plate, in addition to a later plate also by Gould (1850) and find that the dorsal coloration of the birds in both plates resembles specimens representing the pale form.

The type-series of *plumiferus* is in the British Museum (Natural History). Specimen BM 1855.12.19.30, a dismantled bird and considered the type of *plumiferus* (according to Swarth, *in* Grinnell, 1932), probably was selected by Ogilvie-Grant. However, because Gould did not designate a holotype, BM 1855.12.19.30 is a lectotype.

Gould (1850) stated that only three specimens were found among Douglas's belongings. But Derek Goodwin (*in litt.*, 7 November 1975) of the British Museum, who was kind enough to examine the lectotype and other specimens of the presumed type-series of *plumiferus*, found a fourth (uncatalogued) specimen. The lectotype was catalogued in 1855; the other two specimens, in 1881. The lectotype and another specimen of the series (BM 1881.5.1.5509) resemble individuals of the pale form, whereas BM 1881.5.1.5510 and the uncatalogued specimen resemble individuals of the dark form (Goodwin, *in litt.*).

According to van Rossem (1937), specimens of *O. pictus* are vulnerable to rather rapid postmortem changes in color. However, specimens of the dark race in the National Museum of Natural History and the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, collected in the mid-1800's are similar in color to recently collected specimens from the same region. Although the lectotype of *plumiferus* was at one time mounted, there are no indications of bleaching from exposure, such as might have occurred had the specimen been on display, and which would explain the pallor of the lectotype (Goodwin, *in litt.*). The fact that the lectotype is a young adult (Swarth, *in*

Grinnell, 1932) has no bearing since dorsal coloration of *O. pictus* does not vary with maturity (van Rossem, 1937).

Goodwin (*in litt.*) found the lectotype of *plumiferus* to be only slightly darker than specimens of *O. p. russelli* Miller, 1946, from southern California, a race that is even paler than the pale northern form. Thus, the color of the upper parts of the lectotype of *plumiferus* and the plates of the species (Gould 1837a, 1850) indicate that the name *plumiferus* should apply to the pale form.

The type-series of *plumiferus* may have been acquired from a hunter at Ft. Vancouver whom Douglas (1904:261, 262) had asked to collect specimens of *O. pictus*. If so, he apparently obtained birds from both slopes of the Cascade Mountains. The two dark specimens in the type-series of *plumiferus* must have been collected within the range of nominate *pictus* (the dark race) whereas the lectotype of *plumiferus* and BM 1881.5.1.5509 were no doubt collected from the east slope of the Cascades. Travel from Ft. Vancouver (west of the Cascades) eastward to the interior was not uncommon in Douglas's time. From Ft. Vancouver the nearest population of the pale form is in Wasco County, Oregon, approximately 90 air miles distance to the east and to which I hereby restrict the type-locality of *plumiferus*.

In summary, the dark northern race of Mountain Quail should be known as *Oreortyx pictus pictus* (restricted type-locality: Junction of the Willamette and Santiam rivers, Linn County, Oregon), which occurs west of the Cascade Mountains. The pale northern race found east of the Cascades should be known as *O. p. plumiferus* (restricted type-locality: Wasco County, Oregon). The name *O. p. palmeri* is a subjective synonym of *O. p. pictus*. This treatment, insofar as pertaining to the nomenclature and ranges of the two races, follows Ridgway (*in* Baird et al., 1874) and the first three editions of the A.O.U. Check-list. Therefore, *palmeri* of the A.O.U. Check-list (1957) becomes a synonym of *pictus*, and *pictus* (*sensu* A.O.U., 1957) reverts to *plumiferus*.

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